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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda items 36, 37 and 87
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 26 May 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the declaration by the President of the French Republic, Mr. Jacques Chirac, and the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, entitled "Appeal for peace by the French and Egyptian Presidents", adopted at the close of their meeting in Paris on 18 May 1998.

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and the text of the declaration distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 37 and 87, and of the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of our highest consideration.

(Signed) Alain DEJAMMET
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
France to the United Nations

(Signed) Nabil ELARABY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Egypt to the United Nations

ANNEX

Appeal for peace issued by the President of the French Republic and the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Paris on 18 May 1998

We, the Presidents of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the French Republic, express our extreme concern at the continuing deadlock on all aspects of the Middle East peace process. We are gravely concerned, in particular, at the lack of progress on the Palestinian aspect, despite the genuine efforts made by the United States of America which we have supported as a step towards relaunching the peace process. In this connection, we welcome the positive reaction of the Palestinians to the latest United States proposals, and we issue an urgent appeal to the Israeli Government to now respond to these proposals in a positive and constructive manner. Any further delay in the resumption of the peace process can only lead to greater frustration, which will in turn inevitably result in violence and instability, as the latest developments have shown.

We solemnly reaffirm our commitment to the peace process launched in Madrid. We believe firmly that security can be assured only through the establishment of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on the faithful implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1976), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and on the principles agreed at Madrid, notably the exchange of land for peace and the attainment of the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people. In our view, this should lead to the exercise of the right of the Palestinian people to establish its own independent State, based on its right of self-determination. Moreover, we emphasize the absolute necessity of respecting strictly and faithfully the agreements signed within the framework of the Oslo process, and of refraining from unilateral measures, in particular the building of settlements, which contradict those agreements and principles. We also express the urgent need to resume negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese aspects, based on the progress achieved between the parties concerned.

The Madrid Conference and the ensuing progress aroused extraordinary hope in peoples who had long been deprived of their rights and of the possibility of living in peace and security. Significant courageous steps have already been taken along the road towards achieving these objectives. We cannot accept conditions that would cause a return to frustration, tension and violence. We solemnly appeal for short-term considerations to be surmounted in order to respond to the historic challenge of peace in a spirit of responsibility.

That is the unanimous will of the international community, which has accorded the highest priority to the Middle East peace process in the hope that an Arab-Israeli settlement will be concluded before the close of the century. We emphasize the growing responsibility of all international Powers, particularly the United States, the European Union and the Russian Federation, to persevere in their efforts to overcome the obstacles which are blocking the resumption and success of the Middle East peace process in all its aspects.

To this end, we have considered several alternatives. We propose a conference of countries which are determined to save the peace process. Such a

conference would maintain and confirm all existing principles and agreements. It would then seize the protagonists with a view to giving renewed hope and renewed impetus to the peace process. We shall be holding in-depth consultations with all those of our partners who are concerned by this project.